

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the specification as follows.

**Page 1, please replace the first paragraph with the following amended paragraph:**

The present invention relates to needle apparatus.

**Page 1, please replace the second paragraph with the following amended paragraph:**

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention there is provided A a needle apparatus characterised by a thin walled sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, a tubular needle having a distal end and a proximal end, the needle having a sharp point at the distal end thereof, the needle being closely engaged by the sleeve, the needle and the sleeve being longitudinally moveable relative to one another between a first position at which the needle extends from the sleeve and a second position at which the sharp point is located within the sleeve, the apparatus further comprising a hub in which the needle is fixedly mounted adjacent the proximal end of the needle, the needle extending from the hub so that the distal end thereof is located externally of the hub, the sleeve having the proximal end thereof located within the hub and being longitudinally slidably mounted relative to the hub, the sleeve extending from the hub so that the distal end thereof is located externally of the hub, the needle apparatus being arranged to pierce tissue when the sleeve and the needle are in the relative first position and being such that after the tissue has been pierced the needle is arranged to be withdrawn from the tissue whilst the sleeve remains in situ in the tissue as a result of

the pressure applied radially by surrounding tissue.

**Page 8, please replace the fourth paragraph with the following amended paragraph:**

Modifications and variations as would be apparent to a skilled addressee are deemed to be within the scope of the present invention. For example, ~~the or~~ each finger 36 could be located externally of the hub 18 as could the projection 34.